Free telephones for Internet Service

2434. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give free telephone connections for internet service; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above. .

Tuticorin-Colombo Ferry Service

2435. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India opposing the proposed Tuticorin-Colombo Ferry Service citing the activities of the banned Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE);

(b) whether it is also a fact that the benefits of the proposed Ferry Service in terms of trade would be minimal and would be largely symbolic and that the availability of a cheap ferry service would further give a fillip to drug smuggling apart from attracting potential asylum seekers; and

(c) whether it is also true that the said Ferry Service proposal was deferred earlier by the Government when the Hon'ble Chief Minister had opposed the said move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Tuticorin-Colombo passenger ferry service with suitable infrastructure established at the entry/exit points will provide an economical mode of transport, which is mutually beneficial to the economic, social and cultural advancement of the two countries.